

Subject: Concerned Students of Middlebury Updates
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From: Concerned Students of Middlebury
To: students
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TL;DR: updates on Concerned Students of Middlebury fall semester work and spring plans, join our organization [here](#) :)

To our Middlebury community,

Welcome back and happy spring semester! We hope you have been settling into classes and enjoying the snowy white scenery. We wanted to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves once again to the Middlebury community and talk about our progress on our [2021-22 school year goals](#). Our work arose from these goals and supporting students with their own projects.

Community Standards

Last semester, we worked closely with Dean of Students Derek Doucet and Vice President of Student Affairs Smita Ruzicka to think of ways to improve recognition of our institution's community standards. We are continuing to work with Dean Doucet in analyzing conduct and community standards data to ensure equity in these processes for underrepresented students. We are now largely focusing on how to improve community responsibility for others collective wellbeing during the pandemic and will continue this project this semester.

Accessibility and Advocating with and for Students with Disabilities

A large focus of our work last fall was increasing Middlebury's accessibility and inclusion for all students, especially those with disabilities. In collaboration with the [SGA Junior Committee](#), we are developing a campus wide accessibility needs assessment. We are also working with the Student Activities Office to improve event accessibility by updating the Presence event registration form, student handbook, and student leader training. Another important project has been beginning the conversation with administrators around increasing accessibility to courses through a hybrid model for students who face less barriers to their education in a virtual space.

We have also committed to tackling ableism and including access practices through each of our actions and projects. All of our meetings have been hybrid to increase accessibility and we aim to include this lens in all our conversations with administrators.

Mental Health

Mental health and wellbeing were a large area of focus for our entire community last semester. We focused our work on listening to student needs surrounding mental health services and our rigorous academic culture. We advocated these needs to administrators and ensured mental health was a top priority in their work. This will continue to be an area of focus this spring, especially with national counseling shortages and adjusting to the Center of Health and Wellness' new flexible care model.

Anti-Semitism

Antisemitism was a large focus of our activist work this semester. We had many meetings with Dean Doucet and President Patton to discuss this pervasive issue in our community and make them aware of the student concern around observed anti-semitic behavior by students and faculty.

Nominations

Through our appointments committee, CSM nominated students to the Search Committee for a new Vice President of Equity and Inclusion and Search Committee for our new Director of Public Safety. We already have requests for more appointments this semester for special committees in the Office of the Dean of Students. If you would be interested in potentially serving on a college committee or taskforce, please respond to this email so we can keep you in the loop.

Senior Leadership Group Meetings

We continue to meet with the [Senior Leadership Group](#) monthly to discuss underrepresented student concerns and collaborate on ways to address them. We make them aware of our projects and student concerns to gain their perspectives and collaborate. SLG members also invite us to collaborate on their projects and ask for our input on ideas. All CSM members are invited to these meetings, so if you would like an audience with the SLG, join us!

Website and Social Media

We continue to update our [website \(go/csm/\)](https://go/csm/) to improve its accessibility for screen readers. Feel free to look it over to meet our executive board and look over our goals. Also, follow our [instagram \(@concernedatmidd\)](#) to stay up to date on future events and small updates.

If these projects look empowering to you, if you have ideas for more projects we can work on, or if combating bias and promoting a more inclusive campus is something you are interested in, consider joining us [here](#). We want as many students as interested to be able to take part in this work of making a better Middlebury that we can all call home. Also, feel free to come to our general meetings. They occur **every other Friday at 4:00 PM ET with our first meeting being next Friday, February 25, 2021 in the Robert A Jones House Conference Room** (second floor of the house at the end of the street behind the tennis courts; there is an elevator) **or by Zoom at go/meetcsm/** (password 2021).

Best,
Citlali Aguilera-Rico, President of CSM



Concerned Students of Middlebury College
CSM Executive Board

Schedule a meeting with us [here](#)

About CSM

The Concerned Students of Middlebury (CSM) was founded during the summer of 2020. Nationally there was a long overdue conversation surrounding race and marginalization due to identity. In the Middlebury community, we also needed to have a similar dialogue. In the time since we have become an organization, we have worked with campus partners to ensure the institution is listening to voices of those who have historically faced marginalization. This has included meeting with campus leadership (the [Senior Leadership Group](#), [Student Government Association](#), and more) to establish ways to create a better Middlebury community that truly works for all of us. We have various committees and structures that can be checked out at [go/csm](#).